

METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR ENSURING CONTINUOUS  
DATA FLOW BETWEEN RE-TRANSMITTERS WITHIN  
A CHAINCAST COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

5 ABSTRACT

A method and system for performing chaincast communication to multiple communication systems (e.g., computer systems) within a system of coupled electronic devices (e.g., the Internet). The present invention provides a system wherein a broadcast source communicates primary broadcast information (e.g.,  
10 encoded audio radio content, encoded audio/video television content, etc.) to a first group of electronic devices. The first group of electronic devices can be instructed by a chaincast manager to then communicate (e.g., forward or re-transmit) the broadcast information to other electronic devices which devices can also be instructed to communicate to more devices, etc., thereby reducing  
15 the bandwidth requirements of the communication channel between the broadcast source and the first group of electronic devices. The chaincast manager, coupled to the Internet, is used to track and manage which devices are forwarding broadcast information to which other devices. The chaincast manager is also used to monitor the packet rates between the electronic  
20 devices. In response to the packet rates falling below a pre-determined threshold value, the transmission re-routes communications to provide better communication load sharing across the system. The chaincast communication system may also include a number of secondary broadcast servers for broadcasting secondary information content (e.g., advertisement, emergency  
25 information, community information, etc.) to be rendered independently of the primary broadcast information content.